

5 villagers hacked to death

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From Joseph Hanlon
in Maputo

Five people were hacked to death by South African-backed rebels in a second Christmas massacre in Mozambique. On Monday Western diplomats reported that more than 40 passengers from a long-distance bus had been shot by the Mozambique National Resistance on Christmas Day.

The new incident was described yesterday by a witness, 25-year-old Inacio Matsinhe. He told how his sister was beaten with a hammer, struck on the back of the neck with an axe, and had her head cut off and stuck on a post. "There were armed men all around us and we had to sit on the ground and watch," he said.

The Frelimo party secretary and his deputy, and two other people, were executed in the same way. "They called themselves the Mozambique National Resistance and said anyone in the government or party of Samora Machel must die," he said.

The raid happened on Christmas Eve in the village of Marrangwa, about 150 miles east of Maputo. About 200 people were having a party in the compound of one of Inacio's uncles. About 50 heavily armed men of the MNR arrived and interrogated the villagers. Inacio said the leaders were in uniform and had to use translators, because they spoke Shona.